

REMARKS

This paper is responsive to any paper(s) indicated above, and is responsive in any other manner indicated below.

PENDING CLAIMS

Claims 1-9 were pending, under consideration and subjected to examination in the Office Action. Appropriate claims have been amended and/or added (without prejudice or disclaimer) in order to adjust a clarity and/or focus of Applicant's claimed invention. That is, such changes are unrelated to any prior art, scope adjustment or patentability, and are simply minor clarifications to Applicant's original claims, or are additional claims Applicant wants considered upon further substantive examination. At entry of this paper, Claims 1-23 will be pending for further consideration and examination in the application.

REJECTION UNDER 35 USC '103

All 35 USC '103 rejections (i.e., the 35 USC '103 rejection of claims 1-9 are respectfully traversed. All descriptions of Applicant's disclosed and claimed invention, and all descriptions and rebuttal arguments regarding the applied prior art, as previously submitted by Applicant in any form, are repeated and incorporated hereat by reference. Further, all Office Action statements regarding the prior art rejections are respectfully traversed. As additional arguments, Applicant respectfully submits the following.

In order to properly support a §103 obviousness-type rejection, the reference not only must suggest the claimed features, but also must contain the motivation for modifying the art to arrive at an approximation of the claimed features. However, the cited art does not adequately support a §103 obviousness-type rejection because it does not, at minimum, disclose (or suggest) the following limitations of Applicant's claims.

More particularly, Applicant's disclosed and claimed invention is directed to document database search arrangements having a potential to enhance a convenience to a user as to selection of databases to be searched. In order to provide such convenience, Applicant's disclosed and claimed arrangements keep track of a search history (i.e., a table), useable to determine which subsequent databases are most likely to be used going forward from a present search. More particularly, referencing Applicant's FIG. 3, for example, shown is an (non-limiting) example one of Applicant's associative search recording table. As understanding, each of the "x" entries can be used to record a number of times x_{ij} of searching a document database j based on a search result of a document database i .

That is, note that FIG. 3's left-hand vertical column lists possible search sources (e.g., DB₁, DB₂, DB₃, Keyword) of a present search i , whereas an uppermost horizontal row lists possible next search destinations (e.g., DB₁, DB₂, DB₃) of a subsequent search. Detailing one example entry, every time a present search from DB₂ results in a subsequent search of DB₃, FIG. 3's table entry x_{23} will be incremented a predetermined amount (e.g., incremented by one). That is, such entry x_{23} can maintain a count representing a number of times DB₃ was searched

responsive to a DB_2 search, ...hence, since the entry associates one search to another, the table may be coined a "an associative search recording table". As a count history is built up within the table, such can be used to predict databases most likely used after a present search, and provide guidance to a user.

More particularly, an example is shown in Applicant's FIG. 5. That is, starting from a DB_1 search, FIG. 5's horizontal row associated therewith shows that a subsequent search would occur most likely in DB_3 , DB_2 , DB_1 , respectively, given that the table entries (i.e., counts) for the same are 30, 20, 10, respectively. Hence, Applicant's arrangement can utilize such data to suggest such hierarchy of databases to a user, such being shown, for example, in FIG. 6's block 202. In contrast, starting from a Keyword search, FIG. 5's horizontal row associated therewith shows that a subsequent search would occur most likely in DB_1 , DB_2 , DB_3 , respectively, given that the table entries (i.e., counts) for the same are 60, 40, 20, respectively. Hence, Applicant's arrangement can utilize such data to suggest such hierarchy of databases to a user, such being shown in FIG. 4's block 202.

One important aspect to note is that Applicant's "an associative search recording table" maintains counts associating one DB search with other DB searches. In terms of claim language, Applicant's independent claim 1 (and claims dependent therefrom), for example, claims "an associative search recording table recording a number of times x_{ij} of searching a document database j based on a search result of a document database i ." Added independent method claim 16 substantially parallels independent claim 1, and accordingly, independent claim 16

(and claims dependent therefrom) contain parallel limitations. Independent claim 6 (and claims dependent therefrom) contain similar or analogous limitations.

Turning now to rebuttal of the applied art, Meyerzon et al. fails miserably as a 103 reference, because Meyerzon et al. does not disclose any type of associative table recording a number of times of database search based upon a search result of a prior document database. That is, while Meyerzon et al. illustrates and describes, for example, a FIG. 4 table, such table has no count (i.e., number of times) regarding associating one search DB to another. Indeed, Office Action comments (page 3) state, "Meyerzon does not clearly teach the number of times of searching." Instead, Meyerzon et al.'s table lists each electronic document with a corresponding "crawl number". If, during a subsequent search, an updated document is encountered, Meyerzon et al.'s table may also include a listing of a modified crawl number.

One important point to note, is that each document entry (i.e., horizontal row) of Meyerzon et al.'s table contains ABSOLUTELY NO COUNT OR OTHER INDICATION relating that document to a prior database, i.e., the document entries contain information pertaining to that document and only to that document. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that no Meyerzon et al. teaching would have disclosed or suggested Applicant's "associative search recording table recording a number of times x_{ij} of searching a document database j based on a search result of a document database i ."

None of the other applied references cure the major deficiency mentioned above with respect to the primary Meyerzon et al. reference. Accordingly, it is

respectfully submitted that no combination of the applied references would have disclosed or suggested Applicant's invention.

Other ones of Applicant's claims add features/limitations beyond those mentioned above. For example, claim 10 recites "wherein for each document database of a plurality of select document databases, the associative search recording table has plural entries with differing entries for recording a respective number of times x_{ij} of searching the document database j based on a search result of differing ones of document databases i , respectively." For example, note that Applicant's FIG. 3 has entries x_{11} , x_{21} , x_{31} , to record a number of times of searching the document database DB_1 based on a search result of differing ones of document databases DB_1 , DB_2 , DB_3 , respectively. Again, no applied reference or combination of applied references would have disclosed or suggested such feature/limitations.

As another example, claim 11 recites "storing, in the associative search recording table, a number of times x_{ij} of searching a document database j based on a search result of a keyword i ." That is, note that Applicant's FIG. 3 has example entry x_{14} to record a number of times of searching the document database DB_1 based on a search result of a "Keyword". And again, no applied reference or combination of applied references would have disclosed or suggested such feature/limitations.

As yet a further example, claim 12 recites "wherein for each document database of a plurality of select document databases, the associative search recording table has plural entries with differing entries for recording a respective number of times x_{ij} of searching the document database j based on a search result of

differing ones of document databases or keywords i , respectively." Expanding (see underlining ahead) the claim 10 explanation above, Applicant's FIG. 3 has entries x_{11} , x_{21} , x_{31} , x_{41} , to record a number of times of searching the document database DB_1 based on a search result of differing ones of document databases DB_1 , DB_2 , DB_3 , Keyword respectively. Again, no applied reference or combination of applied references would have disclosed or suggested such feature/limitations.

In addition to the foregoing, the following additional remarks from Applicant's foreign representative are also submitted in support of traversal of the rejection and patentability of Applicant's claims.

Characteristics of Applicant's invention are storing an associative search recording table recording the number of times X_{ij} of searching a document database j based on a search result of a document database i (claim 1), and associative search recording table storing means for storing an associative search recording table recording the number of times x_{ij} of searching a document database j based on a search result of a document database i (claim 6). According to such characteristics, the history of the associative search is recorded as an associative search recording table, and an ordering of the document databases may be carried out by using the associative search recording table. Stating the above differently, associative search recording table records how many times and from which document database to which one the associative search is performed (lines 12-17 page 17).

Meyerzon et al.'s method includes performing a Web crawl, by retrieving a set of electronic documents and subsequently retrieving additional electronic documents

based on addresses specified within each electronic document (lines 21-24 col.2). Fig.4 illustrates an exemplary history map including multiple entries 410, including crawl number crawled data 418 that prevents duplicate processing of URLs during a crawl etc. (lines 17-38 col.10). In contrast, an associative search recording table in Applicant's invention records a table recording the number of times Xij of searching a document database j based on a search result of a document database i. Thus, Meyerzon et al's history map and Applicant's associative search recording table in our invention are absolutely and completely different with respect to contents, and the aim of use thereof. Therefore, Meyerson et al. do not show or suggest characteristics of Applicant's invention.

Athavale et al. describes that a network commerce server 26 in turn sends a confirmation in the change order request signal 32 - 2 to the order database server 28, directing the order database server 28 to update the order entry tables 54 in the order database 52 with the modified customer order based on the change order request as confirmed by the customer (lines 57-65 col.9). However, the order entry tables 54 in Athavale et al. and Applicant's associative search recording table are completely different, and thus Athavale et al. do not show or suggest characteristics of Applicant's invention.

Berson et al. describe a system that may be implemented with user software, running either stand-alone or in conjunction with a web site and central server, whereby the user inputs various personal identifying information about himself or another, and then is guided through a methodical process to find personal information about himself or the other person in various external databases (line 3 1-

39 col.2). Although Berson et al. may describe that the fee for the search may be computed (50) and included in the report for forwarding to the user (47) (line 51-54 col.11), as Office Actions comments point out, Berson et al. do not show or suggest characteristics of Applicant's invention at all.

Spencer et al. describe providing a computer implemented retrieval method for determining and selectively sharing information about the terms, both in the query, and external to the query, that are likely to contribute a significant error to the document score in one database relative to some other database if their IDF values are not synchronized, or made equal (lines 20-26 col.4). However, Spencer et al. do not show or suggest characteristics of our invention at all.

As a result of all of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art (taken alone and in the Office Action combinations) would not support a '103 obviousness-type rejection of Applicant's claims. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of such '103 rejection, and express written allowance of all of the '103 rejected claims, are respectfully requested. Further, at this point, it is respectfully submitted as a reminder that, if new art is now cited against any of Applicant's unamended claims, then it would not be proper to make a next action final.

EXAMINER INVITED TO TELEPHONE

The Examiner is herein invited to telephone the undersigned attorneys at the local Washington, D.C. area telephone number of 703/312-6600 for discussing any Examiner's Amendments or other suggested actions for accelerating prosecution and moving the present application to allowance.

RESERVATION OF RIGHTS

It is respectfully submitted that any and all claim amendments and/or cancellations submitted within this paper and throughout prosecution of the present application are without prejudice or disclaimer. That is, any above statements, or any present amendment or cancellation of claims (all made without prejudice or disclaimer), should not be taken as an indication or admission that any objection/rejection was valid, or as a disclaimer of any scope or subject matter. Applicant respectfully reserves all rights to file subsequent related application(s) (including reissue applications) directed to any/all previously claimed limitations/features which have been subsequently amended or cancelled, or to any/all limitations/features not yet claimed, i.e., Applicant continues (indefinitely) to maintain no intention or desire to dedicate or surrender any limitations/features of subject matter of the present application to the public.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that the claims listed above as presently being under consideration in the application are now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, early allowance of such claims is respectfully requested.

To the extent necessary, Applicant petitions for an extension of time under 37 CFR '1.136. Please charge any shortage in the fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees and excess claim fees, to Deposit

Reply to Office action dated 23 March 2004

Account No. 01-2135 (referencing case No. 1021.40599X00) and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Paul J. Skwierawski".

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